

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for managing an image of an object stored in a database, the method
2 comprising the steps of:
3 reducing a storage size of the image from a base level to at least one secondary
4 level based on reduction criteria, wherein each secondary level is smaller in storage size
5 than the base level.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of repeating the step of reducing to
2 reduce the storage size of the image from one secondary level to another secondary level
3 based on the reduction criteria.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of repeating occurs after expiration of a
2 predetermined duration.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the image is of a document.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the base level is a compressed format and each secondary
2 level has a different Q-table than the base level.
- 1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the compressed format is a JPEG baseline compression
2 format.

1 7. The method of claim 5, wherein the compressed format is a JPEG 2000 compression
2 format.

1 8. The method of claim 5, wherein the at least one secondary level includes at least two
2 secondary levels, each secondary level having a different Q-table than every other
3 secondary level.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein a first secondary level exhibits lower image quality
2 compared to the base level; and a second secondary level exhibits lower image quality
3 compared to the first secondary level.

1 10. The method of claim 9, wherein the at least two secondary levels includes at least three
2 secondary levels; and a third secondary level exhibits lower image quality compared to
3 the second secondary level.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the image includes a plurality of images.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of reducing includes compressing the image.

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein the image is in a compressed format and the step of
2 reducing includes entropy decoding the image, changing quantized coefficients and
3 quantization tables, and entropy recoding the image.

1 14. The method of claim 1, wherein an initial step of reducing includes deleting a portion of
2 the image.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein the reduction criteria includes at least one of: available
2 data storage, time since object creation, time since object imaging, prior size reduction,
3 prior access by user, object value, user account type, volume of objects per user account,
4 user total account value, a user selection, user fees paid, user account history, suspicious
5 activity and object part imaged.

1 16. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of maintaining a copy of image at the
2 base level.

1 17. The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of replacing the image at the
2 secondary level with a copy of the image at the base level when a user requests access to
3 the copy of the image at the base level.

1 18. The method of claim 17, wherein the user includes an indication of the duration that the
2 base level will be required when the user requests the copy of the image at the base level.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein a final step of reducing includes purging the image.

1 20. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of maintaining statistical data for
2 comparison with the reduction criteria.

1 21. A method of managing storage size of an image of an object, wherein the image is
2 accessed by a user, the method comprising the steps of:
3 reducing the storage size of the image based on reduction criteria to create a size-
4 reduced version;
5 allowing user access to the size-reduced version for a predetermined duration; and
6 repeating the steps of reducing and allowing after expiration of the predetermined
7 duration.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the step of reducing includes compressing the image.

1 23. The method of claim 21, wherein the image is in a compressed format and the step of
2 reducing includes achieving more compression.

1 24. The method of claim 23, wherein the step of reducing includes entropy decoding the
2 image, changing quantized coefficients and quantization tables, and entropy recoding the
3 image.

1 25. The method of claim 21, wherein an initial step of reducing includes deleting a portion of
2 the image.

1 26. The method of claim 21, wherein the reduction criteria includes at least one of: available
2 data storage, time since object creation, time since object imaging, prior size-reduction,

3 prior access by user, object value, user account type, volume of objects per user account,
4 user total account value, user selections, user fees paid, user account history, suspicious
5 activity and object side imaged.

1 27. The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of maintaining a substantially
2 lossless quality version of the image.

1 28. The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of allowing the user to access the
2 substantially lossless quality version upon request.

1 29. The method of claim 21, wherein a final step of reducing includes purging the image.

1 30. A system for managing storage size of an image of an object where the image is accessed
2 by a user online, the system comprising:
3 a size-reduction evaluator to periodically evaluate whether the image is subject to
4 a size reduction based on size-reduction criteria; and
5 a size reducer to reduce the size of the image based on instructions from the size-
6 reduction evaluator.

1 31. The system of claim 30, further comprising a designator to assign the image a designation
2 indicative of the status of the image based on the size-reduction criteria.

1 32. The system of claim 31, wherein the size-reduction criteria includes at least one of: prior
2 size-reduction, prior access by user, object value, user account type, volume of objects in
3 user account, user total account value, a user selection, user fee paid, user account history
4 and object side imaged.

1 33. The system of claim 32, wherein the size-reduction criteria includes real-time factors
2 including at least one of: available data storage, suspicious activity, time since object
3 creation and time since object imaging.

1 34. The system of claim 30, further comprising a storage module to save a substantially
2 lossless quality version of the image.

1 35. The system of claim 30, wherein the size-reduction evaluator determines whether to leave
2 the image alone, reduce the storage size of the image or purge the image.

1 36. The system of claim 30, wherein a first activation of the size reducer purges an image
2 portion of the image.

1 37. The system of claim 30, wherein the image is in a compressed format and the size reducer
2 is adapted to decode the image, change a dynamic range scaling of the image, and recode
3 the image.

1 38. The system of claim 30, wherein the size-reduction evaluator determines a
2 reduction/purging rule to be followed by the size reducer based on the reduction criteria.

1 39. A system for managing storage size of an image of an object, wherein the image is
2 accessed by a user, the system comprising:
3 means for evaluating the image based on reduction criteria to determine whether
4 to reduce the data storage size of the image, leave the image alone or purge the image;
5 and
6 means for reducing the data storage size of the image based on the results of the
7 means for evaluating.

1 40. A computer program product comprising a computer useable medium having computer
2 readable program code embodied therein for managing a size of a stored image that is
3 accessible to a user, the computer program product comprising:
4 program code configured to evaluate the image based on reduction criteria to
5 determine whether to reduce the data storage size of the image, leave the image alone or
6 purge the image; and
7 program code configured to reduce the data storage size of the image based on the
8 results of the evaluating.